

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 COLOMB 02487 191137Z  
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-02 INR-07  
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15  
USIA-15 EB-07 COME-00 TRSE-00 IO-14 AID-05 /094 W  
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R 191041Z JUL 77  
FM AMEMBASSY COLOMBO  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7709

UNCLAS COLOMBO 2487

E.O. 11652: N/A  
TAGS:PINT, EINV, CE

SUBJ: PRESS INTERVIEW WITH UNP LEADER J.R. JAYEWARDENE

REF: COLOMBO 1601

1. IN A FRONT PAGE INTERVIEW IN WEEKEND (SUN GROUP) NEWS-PAPER, UNITED NATIONAL PARTY (UNP) LEADER J.R. JAYEWARDENE EXPANDED SOMEWHAT ON WHAT HIS PARTY INTENDS TO DO IF THEY COME TO POWER. SOME OF HIS INTERVIEW FOLLOWED CLOSELY THE PARTY MANIFESTO (REFTEL) AS WHEN HE DISCUSSED HIS PLANS FOR ANEW CONSTITUTION AND FOR ADMINISTRATIVE DECENTRALIZATION WITH A MINISTER APPOINTED FOR EACH DISTRICT. HE REITERATED THAT HE WOULD APPOINT A COMMISSION OF INQUIRY TO INVESTIGATE "THE EXCESSES COMMITTED DURING THE LONG AND DARK PERIOD OF THE EMERGENCY" AND THAT HE WOULD REPEAL THE "BARBAROUS" CRIMINAL JUSTICE OMISSIONS ACT, WHILE CONTINUING TO PROSECUTE FOREIGN-EXCHANGE OFFENDERS, POSSIBLY WITH AMENDMENTS TO THE CRIMINAL CODE. HE ADDED NOTHING TO HIS PARTY'S STATED PLANS TO FORM A EXPORT-PROCESSING FREE TRADE ZONE.

2. ON FOREIGN POLICY, J.R. FLATLY SAID "THERE WILL BE NO CHANGE." HE ADDED THAT SRI LANKA WOULD BE "COMPLETELY NON-ALIGNED" BUT THAT HE INTENDED TO CONCENTRATE HIS EFFORTS

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ON SOLVING THE "PROBLEMS OF SRI LANKA RATHER THAN THOSE OF TWO-THIRDS OF THE WORLD", A DIG AT MRS. BANDARANAIKE'S ROLE IN THE NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT. THE INTERVIEWER MENTIONED ASEAN AND J.R. RESPONDED THAT HE DIDN'T THINK IT WOULD BE "NECESSARY" TO JOIN THE ORGANIZATION. HE ALSO SAID THAT HE SUPPORTED THE INDIAN OCEAN PEACE ZONE.

3. AS HE HAS PROMISED EARLIER IN THE CAMPAIGN, HE SAID THAT HE WOULD ENSURE INDEPENDENCE OF THE PRESS IN SRI LANKA. HE ADDED THAT HE WOULD "ASSOCIATE MEMBERS OF THE OPPOSITION ON THE BOARD OF STATE NEWS AGENCIES," PRESUMABLY INCLUDING THE GOVERNMENT RADIO. FURTHER, HE STATED THAT HE WOULD GIVE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO RECOGNIZED OPPOSITION PARTIES TO PRINT THEIR PAPERS.

4. J.R. REPEATED HIS INTENTION TO REVIEW THE CASES OF JAILED INSURGENTS AND STATED HIS OPINION THAT THE INSURRECTION HAD BEEN CAUSED BY THE "MISLEADING OF THE YOUTH BY UNSCRUPULOUS PERSONS FOR THEIR OWN SELFISH POLITICAL GAIN."

5. WHEN THE INTERVIEWER ASKED J.R.'S PRESENT OPINION ABOUT THE NEED FOR A NATIONAL GOVERNMENT WITH ALL PARTIES REPRESENTED IN THE CABINET, HE REPLIED "YES, I WILL GIVE EFFECT TO SUCH A PROPOSAL FOR THERE'S NO LOGIC IN THIS TINY ISLAND OF OURS BEING DIVIDED BY POLITICAL IDEOLOGIES." (COMMENT: ONE UNP'ER LATER SURMISED TO US THAT THIS STATEMENT MIGHT HAVE THE PROVISIO ATTACHED "IF THEY AGREE FULLY TO MY PROGRAM.") PERKINS

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## Message Attributes

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Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
22 May 2009  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009